

The Commission also recommended to the Legislature that it not wait for the next election provided for in the existing Constitution to take the sense of the people on calling a Constitutional Convention, which would not occur until 1970, but that the question be presented to the people at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Commission worked very closely with my office and with the leaders of the Legislature during the recent session with the result that these two bills, both of which are in accord with the recommendations of the Commission, passed both Houses of the Legislature almost unanimously. The Commission, in recommending that the Constitutional Convention be composed of 142 delegates, recommended also that these delegates be apportioned in the same manner as the membership of the House of Delegates will be apportioned in the next Legislature. This recommendation the Legislature has embodied in Senate Bill 594.

For the first time in nearly one hundred years, therefore, the Legislature of Maryland has acted to call a Constitutional Convention, provided it is approved by the people. The great majority of those voting in the elections held in 1930 and 1950 voted in favor of a Constitutional Convention but the Legislature failed to call a Convention in 1931 and again in 1951, and all efforts of previous administrations in the past twenty years to persuade the Legislature to call a Constitutional Convention have been unavailing.

I have strongly favored a Constitutional Convention for many years and during my administration have worked very hard to persuade the Legislature to call a Convention. It is, therefore, with a real sense of achievement that I have signed these two bills today, thereby assuring the people of the State of Maryland that if they want a Constitutional Convention and so indicate their desire at the election next September, that Convention will convene in Annapolis at twelve noon on De-fenders' Day in 1967, almost one hundred years to the day from the time that the last Constitutional Convention in Maryland adjourned.

The Commission which I appointed, under the able leadership of its Chairman, H. Vernon Eney, Esq., is continuing its inquiry into the revision needed in the Constitution of Maryland. This Commission is studying the most modern examples of state governmental machinery in an effort to solve problems which must be solved if the American dual form of government is to survive and if the State of Maryland and other states are to remain as viable and dynamic institutions of government.